Research Report

Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc. 485 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017

The Readership of Newspaper Pages and Sections: Demographic Segments SMRB SMM--1983

This study is one of a series of marketing research reports prepared by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc., as a service to the Newspaper business and its advertisers. These reports provide the basis of recommendations for the efficient use of the newspaper medium to meet the specific marketing needs of individual companies.

December 1983

Source: 1983 Study of Media and Markets, Simmons Market Research Bureau, Inc.

CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTORY NOTE	1
Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read By:	

	Table Number for:		
	Adults	Males	Females
Totals	1	1	1
Age	2	3	4
Education	5	6	7
Household Income	8	9	10
Employment Status	11	12	13
Occupation	14	15	16
Locality Type	17	18	19

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Measures of media exposure vary with the method of measurement used, whether the medium in question is print or broadcast. For this reason, all those who use media exposure figures should understand exactly how the data were collected.

The figures in this report are from the 1983 Simmons Study of Media and Markets. They were obtained in personal interviews with a multi-stage area probability sample of more than 19,000 adults. Every respondent who reported reading one or more daily newsoapers within the past seven days was asked:

> "When you read or look into (NAME NEWSPAPER), do you generally read or look at every page of the entire newspaper, or do you tend to read or look at only some pages or sections?"

Those who say that they read or look at "only some pages or sections" were shown a card listing ten categories of content carried by the great majority of daily newspapers, as shown in the tables following, and asked:

> "Which of the numbers on this card describe the pages or sections in (NAME NEWSPAPER) you generally read or look at?"

The most important finding emerging from this approach is that six out of ten adult readers (65%)[1] indicate that they usually see every page of the newspaper they read. This does not mean that they read every

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[1]This agrees closely with a 1982 finding by Audits and Surveys, Inc., that 67% of adult readers go through the paper "page by page."

item, but since the human eye is a very efficient scanning device, they have the opportunity to be exposed to any editorial or advertising content appearing in the issue.

In a 1982 study conducted by Audits and Surveys, Inc., a nationwide sample of adults was taken through sampled pages of newspapers read on the day before the interview. Findings from this part of the A&S study suggest that the SMRB figures shown in this report are roughtly equivalent to "page opening." Overall, A&S estimates average page opening at 77%--that is, the average page (or spread) in a daily newspaper is opened by 77% of all those reading the issue.

For the minority who were directly questioned by SMRB's interviewers about specific kinds of content, the figures obtained are probably close to "true" readership figures. Those who wish to estimate how these more selective readers respond to particular kinds of content can do so by subtracting the percentage shown for "usually read every page" and dividing by "read certain pages or sections."

EXAMPLE: In Table 1, the figure shown for "business, finance" is 77%. Subtracting the 62% who usually read every page leaves a remainder of 15%. Dividing this by the 38% who only read certain pages or sections yields 39%, the proportion of those specifically asked about "business, finance" who say that they usually read that page or section. The proportions for selective male (44%) and female (34%) readers indicate a larger difference between the sexes than the overall "readership" or "page opening" figure suggests.

Within any given demographic segment the figures shown in these tables may reasonably be assumed to show the relative level of interest in a specific kind of content. However, any differences found between demographic segments should be interpreted with caution, since these are affected mainly by the percentages who report reading or looking at every page. For example, Table 2 might suggest that adults who are 65 or older are just as interested in "entertainment" pages as those who are 18 to 24. This is only because more older readers report reading every page.

The fairly constant level of page opening for "entertainment" content shown in these SMRB tables might be contrasted with one of the results of a card-sorting game in the 1982 A&S research. The 25 cards used included 21 kinds of editorial content and 4 kinds of ads. In response to this part of the survey, 89% of all newspaper readers between 18 and 24 indicate that they usually read "movie ads," as compared with only 24% of those who are 65 or older. This pattern of higher interest in movie ads among young adults is consistent with other research on movie attendance.

Although different approaches to measuring the elusive concept called "readership" may yield very different results, divergent findings can be equally valuable so long as the user understands exactly how those findings were obtained and what they imply.

In Tables 17 through 19, the percentages shown for "usually read every page" reflect the fact that most of the dailies read in central cities tend to have many more pages than those read in non-metropolitan

areas. Large central city newspapers also have more specialized pages and sections. The Audits and Surveys, Inc. study cited earlier indicates that the average central city reader may open to more pages than the average non-metropolitan reader has in his entire newspaper.

Table 1

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Total Adults, by Sex)

	Percent of Weekday Audience		
	Adults	Males	Females
Usually read every page	65%	64%	66%
Read certain pages or sections	35	36	34
Business, finance	78	79	77
Classified	79	78	79
Comics	80	79	81
Editorial page	81	79	83
Entertainment	82	79	86
Food, cooking	79	72	86
General news	94	92	95
Home furnishings, improvement	76	71	81
Sports	81	88	74
TV, radio listings	79	77	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(109,363)	(52,933)	(56,430)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 2

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Adults, by Age)

	Percent of Weekday Audience					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Usually read every page	56%	61%	64%	66%	71%	73%
Read certain pages or sections	44	39	36	34	29	27
Business, finance	66	75	80	80	84	84
Classified	76	78	79	79	81	81
Comics	79	77	79	79	84	85
Editorial page	71	77	81	83	87	88
Entertainment	82	80	82	80	86	85
Food, cooking	69	75	80	80	86	86
General news	87	93	95	94	97	97
Home furnishings, improvement	67	73	77	77	84	82
Sports	79	78	81	81	83	85
TV, radio listings	72	75	79	79	85	86
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(16,686)	(23,393)	(19,332)	(16,469)	(16,221)	(17,261)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 3

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Males, by Age)

	Percent of Weekday Audience					
	18-24	25-35	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Usually read every page	53%	61%	65%	65%	72%	71%
Read certain pages or sections	47	39	35	35	28	29
Business, finance	65	77	83	81	87	84
Classified	75	79	79	79	80	79
Comics	77	77	79	77	85	84
Editorial page	68	75	80	81	88	85
Entertainment	78	78	79	77	84	80
Food, cooking	61	68	73	73	80	78
General news	84	92	94	93	97	97
Home furnishings, improvement	61	69	72	72	81	77
Sports	86	87	88	90	92	89
TV, radio listings	70	74	77	77	84	82
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,610)	(11,775)	(9,788)	(7,847)	(7,400)	(7,514)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 4

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Females, by Age)

	Percent of Weekday Audience					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Usually read every page	58%	61%	64%	66%	70%	75%
Read certain pages or sections	42	39	36	34	30	25
Business, finance	67	73	76	79	81	84
Classified	77	76	80	79	81	83
Comics	80	77	79	81	83	86
Editorial page	74	78	83	84	87	90
Entertainment	85	83	86	84	88	88
Food, cooking	77	81	86	87	91	92
General news	90	94	95	95	96	98
Home furnishings, improvement	73	76	82	82	87	86
Sports	70	70	73	73	77	86
TV, radio listings	75	76	80	80	85	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,077)	(11,518)	(9,544)	(8,622)	(8,821)	(9,748)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 5

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Adults, by Education)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	College Graduate	1-3 yrs. College	High School Graduate	Some High School or Less
Usually read every page	65%	63%	66%	65%
Read certain pages or sections	35	37	34	35
Business, finance	85	78	77	74
Classified	78	78	80	77
Comics	80	80	80	80
Editorial page	85	81	81	78
Entertainment	84	82	84	79
Food, cooking	79	77	81	78
General news	96	94	93	92
Home furnishings, improvement	77	74	77	75
Sports	82	79	81	81
TV, radio listings	79	78	79	80
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(20,046)	(19,383)	(44,871)	(25,063)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 6

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Males, by Education)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	College Graduate	1-3 yrs. College	High School Graduate	Some High School or Less
Usually read every page	66%	62%	65%	63%
Read certain pages or sections	34	38	35	37
Business, finance	88	80	76	73
Classified	79	77	80	76
Comics	80	78	80	78
Editorial page	85	80	77	75
Entertainment	82	80	79	75
Food, cooking	75	69	72	70
General news	96	94	91	90
Home furnishings, improvement	75	69	72	70
Sports	89	87	89	88
TV, radio listings	79	77	77	76
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(11,955)	(9,714)	(19,508)	(11,755)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 7

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Females, by Education)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	College Graduate	1-3 yrs. College	High School Graduate	Some High School or Less
Usually read every page	64%	63%	67%	67%
Read certain pages or sections	36	37	33	33
Business, finance	80	77	77	75
Classified	77	80	80	78
Comics	80	81	81	80
Editorial page	86	81	83	79
Entertainment	88	85	87	83
Food, cooking	86	84	87	85
General news	96	95	95	93
Home furnishings, improvement	82	80	81	80
Sports	73	71	74	75
TV, radio listings	80	78	82	83
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,091)	(9,669)	(25,363)	(13,307)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 8

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Adults, by Household Income)

	Percent of Weekday Audience				
	$35,000 & over	$25,000-34,999	$15,000-24,999	$10,000-14,999	Under $10,000
Usually read every page	63%	66%	65%	66%	66%
Read certain pages or sections	37	34	35	34	34
Business, finance	81	79	76	76	75
Classified	77	80	79	80	79
Comics	78	80	80	83	81
Editorial page	81	81	80	82	80
Entertainment	81	83	83	83	82
Food, cooking	77	79	79	81	80
General news	93	94	93	94	93
Home furnishings, improvement	74	76	78	78	77
Sports	80	82	81	81	80
TV, radio listings	75	80	81	82	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(30,864)	(21,230)	(24,644)	(15,357)	(17,268)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 9

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Males, by Household Income)

	Percent of Weekday Audience				
	$35,000 & over	$25,000-34,999	$15,000-24,999	$10,000-14,999	Under $10,000
Usually read every page	62%	65%	66%	64%	64%
Read certain pages or sections	38	35	34	36	36
Business, finance	83	80	78	74	74
Classified	77	80	79	79	77
Comics	77	79	80	82	80
Editorial page	80	79	79	79	77
Entertainment	78	80	80	79	77
Food, cooking	70	71	73	74	73
General news	92	93	93	93	92
Home furnishings, improvement	69	71	74	74	71
Sports	88	89	89	88	86
TV, radio listings	73	78	80	79	77
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(16,269)	(11,108)	(12,044)	(6,761)	(6,751)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 10

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Females, by Household Income)

	Percent of Weekday Audience				
	$35,000 & over	$25,000-34,999	$15,000-24,999	$10,000-14,999	Under $10,000
Usually read every page	63%	67%	65%	68%	67%
Read certain pages or sections	37	33	35	32	33
Business, finance	80	77	74	77	76
Classified	78	80	79	82	79
Comics	79	80	81	84	82
Editorial page	84	82	82	83	82
Entertainment	85	87	86	87	84
Food, cooking	85	88	86	86	85
General news	95	95	94	95	94
Home furnishings, improvement	80	81	81	81	81
Sports	71	74	73	76	77
TV, radio listings	76	81	82	84	84
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(14,594)	(10,122)	(12,600)	(8,597)	(10,517)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 11

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Adults, by Employment Status)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Total Employed	Full Time	Part Time	Not Employed
Usually read every page	64%	64%	64%	67%
Read certain pages or sections	36	36	36	33
Business, finance	78	79	77	77
Classified	79	78	79	79
Comics	79	78	82	82
Editorial page	80	80	80	83
Entertainment	82	81	85	83
Food, cooking	77	76	80	82
General news	93	93	94	94
Home furnishings, improvement	75	75	76	79
Sports	82	82	78	80
TV, radio listings	77	77	78	82
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(65,548)	(56,620)	(8,928)	(43,815)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 12

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Males by Employment Status)

	Percent of Weekday Audience	
	Employed†	Not Employed
Usually read every page	64%	64%
Read certain pages or sections	36	36
Business, finance	80	77
Classified	78	78
Comics	79	80
Editorial page	79	79
Entertainment	79	78
Food, cooking	71	73
General news	92	93
Home furnishings, improvement	71	71
Sports	89	87
TV, radio listings	77	78
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(37,489)	(15,444)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

†"Full time" and "part time" breaks excluded because of small base for part-time workers.

Table 13

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Females, by Employment Status)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Total Employed	Full Time	Part Time	Not Employed
Usually read every page	63%	63%	66%	68%
Read certain pages or sections	37	37	34	32
Business, finance	76	75	78	77
Classified	79	78	81	80
Comics	79	78	83	82
Editorial page	81	81	80	85
Entertainment	85	85	85	86
Food, cooking	84	83	87	88
General news	94	94	95	95
Home furnishings, improvement	79	79	81	83
Sports	72	71	73	76
TV, radio listings	78	78	80	84
Project base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(28,059)	(21,835)	(6,224)	(28,371)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 14

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Adults, by Occupation)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Professional, Manager	Clerical, Sales	Craftsman, Foreman	Other Employed
Usually read every page	64%	64%	65%	63%
Read certain pages or sections	36	36	35	37
Business, finance	83	78	77	73
Classified	78	80	79	78
Comics	79	79	80	78
Editorial page	84	80	77	75
Entertainment	83	84	78	80
Food, cooking	77	80	72	75
General news	96	94	90	90
Home furnishings, improvement	76	77	73	72
Sports	81	79	87	82
TV, radio listings	79	77	76	77
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(20,609)	(19,239)	(7,560)	(18,140)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 15

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Males, by Occupation)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Professional, Manager	Clerical, Sales	Craftsman, Foreman	Other Employed
Usually read every page	65%	64%	65%	63%
Read certain pages or sections	35	36	35	37
Business, finance	86	81	77	73
Classified	78	80	79	77
Comics	79	79	79	77
Editorial page	85	77	77	74
Entertainment	81	79	77	78
Food, cooking	73	71	71	70
General news	96	93	90	89
Home furnishings, improvement	73	71	72	69
Sports	88	92	88	88
TV, radio listings	78	77	76	75
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(12,402)	(7,109)	(7,009)	(10,969)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

Table 16

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Females, by Occupation)

	Percent of Weekday Audience		
	Professional, Manager	Clerical, Sales	Other Employed†
Usually read every page	62%	64%	64%
Read certain pages or sections	38	36	36
Business, finance	77	77	74
Classified	77	80	79
Comics	79	79	80
Editorial page	83	82	76
Entertainment	85	86	84
Food, cooking	83	86	83
General news	96	94	93
Home furnishings, improvement	79	80	77
Sports	72	71	72
TV, radio listings	79	78	78
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,207)	(12,131)	(7,722)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

†Includes "craftsman, foreman" (base too small to be shown separately).

Table 17

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Adults, by Locality Type)

	Percent of Weekday Audience		
	Central City	Metro-Suburban	Non-Metropolitan
Usually read every page*	59%	66%	72%
Read certain pages or sections	41	34	38
Business, finance	72	79	83
Classified	73	80	84
Comics	78	80	82
Editorial page	79	81	83
Entertainment	80	83	84
Food, cooking	76	79	83
General news	93	93	95
Home furnishings, improvement	74	76	80
Sports	80	81	82
TV, radio listings	77	78	83
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(33,280)	(52,463)	(23,620)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

*See final paragraph of "Introductory Note."

Table 18

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Males, by Locality Type)

	Percent of Weekday Audience		
	Central City	Metro-Suburban	Non-Metropolitan
Usually read every page*	58%	65%	71%
Read certain pages or sections	42	35	29
Business, finance	72	81	84
Classified	72	80	84
Comics	77	80	81
Editorial page	76	80	81
Entertainment	77	80	80
Food, cooking	68	72	76
General news	92	92	94
Home furnishings, improvement	68	72	76
Sports	88	88	89
TV, radio listings	75	77	80
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(15,941)	(26,112)	(10,880)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

*See final paragraph of "Introductory Note."

Table 19

Types of Daily Newspaper Pages or Sections Usually Read
(Females, by Locality Type)

	Percent of Weekday Audience		
	Central City	Metro-Suburban	Non-Metropolitan
Usually read every page*	59%	67%	72%
Read certain pages or sections	41	33	28
Business, finance	71	77	83
Classified	73	81	84
Comics	79	81	82
Editorial page	81	83	84
Entertainment	83	86	87
Food, cooking	83	86	89
General news	95	94	95
Home furnishings, improvement	79	80	84
Sports	73	73	76
TV, radio listings	79	80	85
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(17,339)	(26,351)	(12,740)

Source: 1983 SMRB SMM

*See final paragraph of "Introductory Note."